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BOOK REVIEWS.

HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE. By *Lucien Lévy-Bruhl*, Maître de Conférences in the Sorbonne, Professor in the École Libre de Sciences Politiques. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. 1899. Pp. 500. Price, \$3.00 (12s.).

M. Lévy-Bruhl has given us in this handsome and inspiring volume more than a history of French philosophy; he has given us a history of French thought. "Is it not," he asks, "too narrow a conception of the history of philosophy to see in it exclusively the logical evolution of successive systems? Doubtless this is one way of looking at it; but we can understand, also, that philosophic thought, even while having its especial and clearly limited object, is closely involved in the life of each civilisation, and even in the national life of every people. In every age it acts upon the spirit of the times, which in turn reacts upon it. In its development it is solidary with the simultaneous development of the other series of social and intellectual phenomena, of positive science, of art, of religion, of literature, of political and economic life; in a word, the philosophy of a people is a function of its history. . . . It is proper, therefore, to introduce into our history of modern philosophy in France, along with the authors of systems distinctly recognised as such, those who have tried under a somewhat different form to synthesise the ideas of their time, and who have modified their direction, sometimes profoundly. Would that be a faithful history of philosophic thought in France which should exclude, apart from the names cited above, those of Montesquieu, Diderot, Rousseau, and Joseph de Maistre? The question is not, as it seems to me, whether they should have a place, but what that place shall be? The reader will see that we have not been satisfied to take half steps, and the question has been settled in this volume in the most liberal spirit."

The book begins with Descartes, who opened a period in the history of philosophic thought, not simply for France, but for the world at large, and we are then led pleasingly along in a charming and appreciative review, abounding in original *aperçus* and acute criticisms, of the works and intellectual environment of Malebranche, Pascal, Bayle, Fontenelle, Montesquieu, Voltaire, the Encyclopædists, Rousseau, Condillac, Condorcet, the Ideologists, the Traditionalists, Maine de Biran, Cousin,

Auguste Comte, Renan, Taine, together with a vast number of subsidiary thinkers. It is mathematics, that, according to Lévy-Bruhl, is the peculiar signature of French philosophy; in nearly every case the studies of the great philosophers began with geometry and analysis (think only of Descartes, Pascal, Malebranche, Fontenelle, D'Alembert, Condorcet, Comte, Renouvier, and Cournot); and hence its predilection for "clear ideas," for "methods," and for deduction as the mode of philosophic procedure. The French philosophers have not been original metaphysicians; they have excelled rather in the philosophy of the sciences, in moral philosophy, and in the theory of classification. Moreover, they have been eminently practical, popular, and unnational, and have appealed to all mankind.

In fine, says the author, "there has been in French philosophy for three centuries a singular persistency of the Cartesian spirit; whether the stamp of the first great modern philosopher was indelible, or whether—which is more likely—Descartes expressed in his doctrine the essential features of the French genius, which caused his influence to co-operate with the tendency of the national temperament. This spirit, which had become predominant by the end of the seventeenth century, was transmitted in the eighteenth through Fontenelle and Montesquieu, prevailed among the 'philosophers,' and even in Condillac, and spent itself in the French Revolution, to be revived in the nineteenth century, modified, but still recognisable, in Auguste Comte. This spirit was wonderfully adaptable to the task of criticism incumbent upon modern philosophy when once out of the Middle Ages and past the Renaissance and the Reformation. The main object was to definitely separate scientific or philosophical speculation from theology, and to overthrow the entire body of institutions based on a historical tradition which was often indefensible, in order to establish in their place a just system. To this work French philosophy was peculiarly adapted by reason of its rational, universal, and humane character, and of its insistence upon logical clearness."

M. Lévy-Bruhl has not neglected living philosophers, and his brief résumé of "the contemporary movement" in French thought contains much information that can scarcely be found elsewhere. All in all, his work is one that appeals as much to the reader of history and literature as to the student of philosophy; it is the story of the development of a great nation's thought, excellently conceived and admirably executed. The intrinsic attractiveness of the book has been greatly enhanced by the bookmaker's art, and its human interest has been heightened by the addition of twenty-three handsome photogravure and half-tone portraits, some of them quite rare. A practical bibliography of works on French philosophy has also been added.

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THE THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS. AN ECONOMIC STUDY IN THE EVOLUTION OF INSTITUTIONS. By *Thorstein Veblen*. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1899. Pages, viii, 400. Price, \$2.00.

It is the purpose of Mr. Veblen's work to "discuss the places and value of the leisure class as an economic factor in modern life." The institution of the leisure